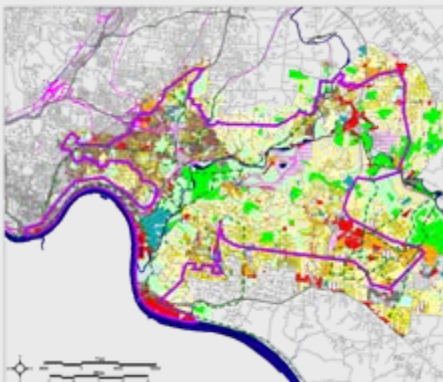
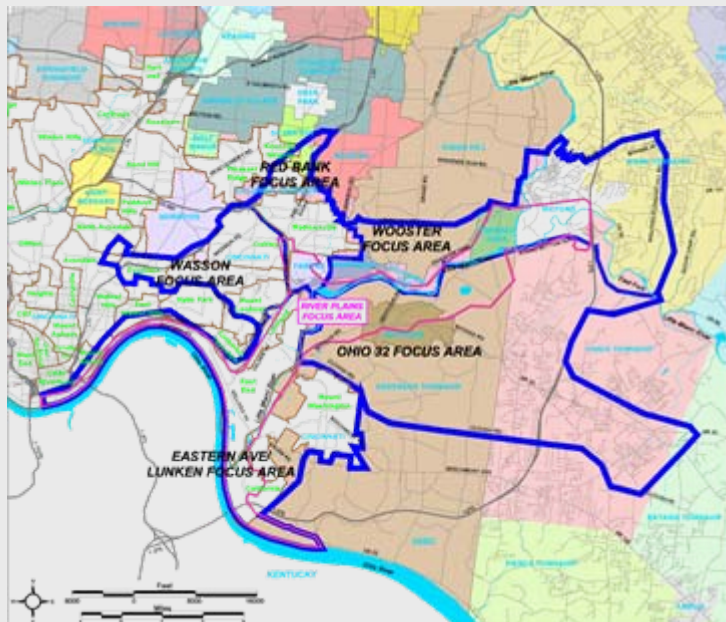
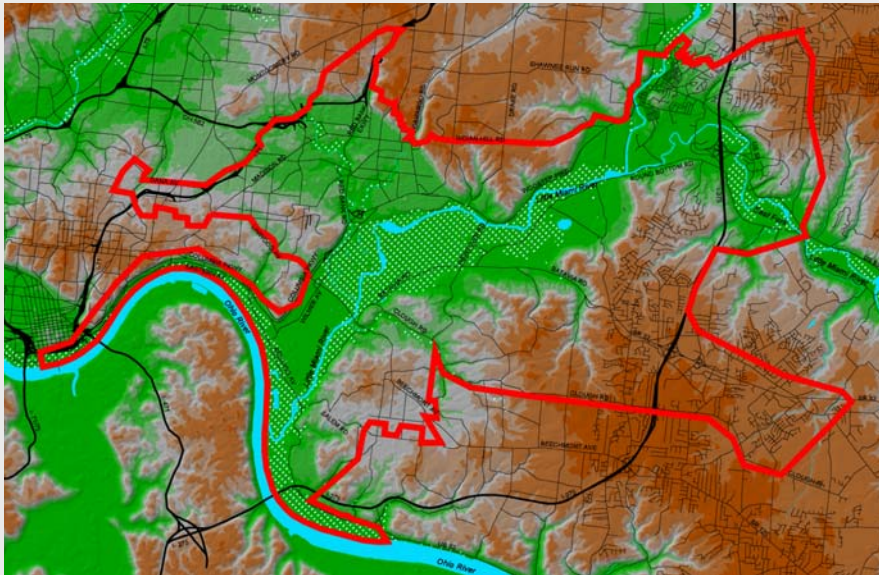


# Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan

*A collaborative effort of Hamilton County, Clermont County, City of Cincinnati, OKI, SORTA/METRO and Local Jurisdictions*



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# Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan

May 2002

## Jurisdictions

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Clermont County  
Batavia Township  
Miami Township  
Union Township  
Milford

Hamilton County  
Anderson Township  
Columbia Township  
Cincinnati  
Fairfax  
Madeira  
Mariemont  
Newtown  
Norwood  
Silverton  
Terrace Park  
The Village of Indian Hill

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## THE VISION

EASTERN CORRIDOR LAND USE VISION PLAN

*A Unique Integration of Land Use Planning and  
Contemporary Multi-Modal Transportation Planning*

The Eastern Corridor of the greater Cincinnati metropolitan area has long been a crossroads. Just as it was centuries ago to our Native Americans, their predecessors and the frontiersmen of the past, it still remains a strategic crossroads, one with an immensely complex natural and cultural history. Buffalo trails, canoes on water, flatboats, riverboats, wagon paths, early railways, frontier roads, inter-urbans, parkways and roadways have all set the framework for today's land uses, public greenswards, town and neighborhood centers, utilities and infrastructure. As stewards of these natural lands and human development inventions we hold a sacred trust to our future generations. This trust is to find a better way to plan our cities, suburbs and rural agricultural lands wisely and find new processes that stimulate the healthy growth and evolution of each. Together the jurisdictions within these 70+ square miles have decided to find a better way to collaborate on a cross-jurisdictional collective Vision that respects their individual goals and needs as well as the collective good. To that end we began each Vision and Focus Group meeting with a timeless quote from Cicero circa 60 BC, "The Chief Law is the Good of the People." The Vision for this crossroads must both listen to the timeless landscape and to the voices of the people...for they are inseparable.

The Eastern Corridor is a rare chapter in the long local history of civic cooperation, open space planning and city planning. A succession of insightful city and metropolitan planning efforts have spoken to this crossroads area, including the Kessler Plan of 1908 and the Coordinated City Plan of 1925 each striving to create a balance between preserving greenswards and guiding development change. A succession of land use, zoning, environmental law, hillside and wetlands legislation and controls have also influenced how green space and development occurs on the land. Recent decades of thoughtful discussion and debate concerning new access, preserving our beautiful natural heritage together with dreams of a better process that would listen to each perspective have led to this moment in time and this unique landscape of challenges.

The key concept in this process has been respect for all perspectives and good ideas. So, what is it that this process is respecting?

- The timelessness of nature with its relentless influences of seasons, floods, droughts, geology, soils and diverse ecology is here speaking to us in the urban wilds of floodplains and hillsides.
- The practical demands of an expanding metropolitan area with the need to house people, create places for commerce, institutions, industry and reserve natural and agricultural resources to build and rebuild the city are here speaking to us.
- The cultural and historical threads that connect to our past are here speaking to us.
- The need to effectively connect centers of commerce, transportation centers, workplaces, recreation centers, residential neighborhoods and town centers is here speaking to us.

All voices have been respected and allowed to speak in this process that has led to this collaborative Vision.

In recent years the Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) representing directors of transportation and highway departments in every state has challenged a few pilot states and other states with initiative to create and test new approaches to solving access and transportation planning assignments by: "Thinking Beyond the Pavement." This new horizon

from the FHWA is in essence a return to the historical basics of better integrating land use planning and transportation planning. The Ohio Department of Transportation has endorsed this participatory Land Use Vision planning process. The Eastern Corridor Plan is Ohio's first large scale multi-modal transportation planning project that integrates Land Use and Transportation Planning. Travel Demand Modeling that will follow will test and explore multiple options for fit and function using this collaborative Vision and this process of the future.

What also sets this planning process and Vision apart is two interrelated concepts, that public involvement at the highest level and cross-jurisdictional authorship of a Collaborative Vision will lead to focused purposeful implementation. The public involvement process has been inclusive and involved over two hundred Citizen Planner participants. In addition the project website, public information meetings, individual citizen meetings, community councils, township meetings and detailed public opinion survey have reached thousands more with in-depth information. Their collective input has informed the Vision Plan and set specific priorities for implementation from that plan. Those priorities have been discussed in detail throughout the visioning process, together with the available implementation tools. This has readied the jurisdictions to focus upon the next and most exciting step in this process, the implementation of highest priority recommendations of the Vision. These next steps toward implementation are beginning.

This Vision proposes honoring the cultural and ecological heritage, preserving sensitive floodplains and hillsides, restoring streamside forests, mitigating wetlands areas, reinventing our brownfields and underutilized urban lands, creating and recreating aging urban neighborhoods, new walkable and livable neighborhoods, old village centers and new fringe cities as well as incorporating necessary public facilities and infrastructure. In essence, this is creating a Vision that is in balance with all aspects of the public's health, safety and welfare. Perhaps it will set a new standard for local cross-jurisdictional cooperation, in concert with other current county and metropolitan area wide planning efforts. The Land Use Vision that follows is one that we all can be proud of and one that truly honors the spirit of Cicero's comment, "The Chief Law is The Good of the People".

Gary W. Meisner, FASLA  
May 2002

#### **VISION STATEMENT FOR THE EASTERN CORRIDOR LAND USE VISION PLAN:**

***Forested waterways, greenways, and tree-covered hillsides define the character of the region, making it attractive to visitors as well as residents. Jurisdictions work cooperatively to focus development in the most appropriate areas while environmentally sensitive zones, parks, and recreational areas are preserved. Pedestrian-friendly neighborhoods with housing opportunities and accessibility for all are distributed throughout the region. A well integrated transportation system composed of roads, convenient transit options, and hike/bike trails allow local residents and passers-through to get to employment, shopping, recreation, entertainment, and other destinations quickly and efficiently with minimal adverse impacts to the environment or local communities.***



**QUOTES** (from the Land Use Visioning Process):

*"Having created a vision we need to channel the enthusiasm, energy and leadership to see it to fruition. In a multi-jurisdictional area with significant special interests, this will be a challenge. However, the benefits to be gained warrant the effort and funding to work toward further development and implementation."* – C. Michael Lemon, Columbia Township

*"The land use planning exercise was very useful in evaluating the kind of future that communities in the Eastern Corridor can pursue. The choice between Mariemont type town centers with dense neighborhood development surrounding open space and light rail vs. unplanned sprawl with endless strip malls without community centers become very clear to participants in the process."* - Rick Griewe, Downtown Cincinnati Inc.

*"It was a great pleasure to work with the various members of the Vision Plan Committee, neighbors, and staff of Meisner and Associates regarding the Eastern Corridor Land Use Plan. Having been a resident of the east side of Cincinnati for thirty plus years, it is exciting to have played a part in planning for the future. Although I did not always agree with each portion of the plan, I do believe we all worked to come up with something that would work for everyone's betterment. Thank you for the opportunity to participate and serve and good luck going forward."* - Claire Evers, UDF

*It was a long and complex process that eventually settled on a land use plan that reflects a collective vision that could exist, but that will take earnest and prolonged effort to achieve. Regardless of the effort the committee put in, it is a drop in the bucket when compared to the effort that will be required to achieve the collective vision. And that's assuming politicians will go along."* - Len Harding, Clermont County League of Women Voters

*"...everyone talks about Beechmont (Avenue) as being the absolute worst case scenario of what we don't want, so hopefully there will be no more Beechmont Avenues. I think it's clear that nobody wants that; at least those of us here.... I think the message (pedestrian friendly, environmentally sensitive, balanced development) is loud and clear. It will be interesting to see what happens."* - Pinky Kocoshis – League of Women Voters / Sierra Club

*"One of the nicest things has been to see so much consensus from so many different communities so you don't think you're the only one seeing this perspective and having this perspective and see that many people have concerns for, at least, balanced development and natural resources."* - Patricia Haas – Village of Fairfax

*"While this is done specifically for this corridor....this plan (methodology) could apply to other planning being done in the region like the Community Compass and Downtown Riverfront planning...."* – Tim Zelek, Hamilton County Park District

*"I would be curious, down the road, to see any documentation from the Federal or State level about how important they thought this process was in seeking local funding for the Eastern Corridor Transportation Study and in getting Federal funding ultimately to build any improvements, whether this will carry weight and how much weight. I know that that will be easy to write, but I would hope there would be some accurate representation of how much clout this process has in actually getting improvements funded....I'm realizing, as we all do, the lack of (land use planning) legislation in Ohio that is an incentive for this kind of thing."* – Ron Docter, City of Cincinnati

*"Freedom of movement is basic to democracy"* - Jim Coppock, City of Cincinnati

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B	Vision Group Meeting Notes
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## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The planning team would like to thank the Vision Group invitees/participants (**bold**), Focus Area invitees/participants, elected officials and County staff who participated in this planning effort and who generously gave of their time by attending the numerous meetings, sharing their views. And our thanks to others who attended these Focus Area Workshops and contributed to the land use ideas and consensus building. Below is a partial list of those who were invited to or attended Vision Group and Focus Area meetings.

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Clermont County	Martha Dorsey
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Clermont County	Mary Walker
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Union Township, Trustee	Bob McGee

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Village of Terrace Park, Council	Steve Holmes
Village of Terrace Park, Council	Terry Howell
Village of Terrace Park, Council	Stephan Olson
Village of Terrace Park, Council	Jim Peterkin
Village of Terrace Park, Council	Mark Porst
Village of Terrace Park, Council	Julie Rugh
Anderson Township, Trustee	Peggy D. Reis
Anderson Township, Trustee	Russell L. Jackson, Jr.
Anderson Township, Trustee	Albert F. Peter
Columbia Township, Trustee	Susan Hughes
Columbia Township, Trustee	Jane Pirman
Columbia Township, Trustee	Paul Davis

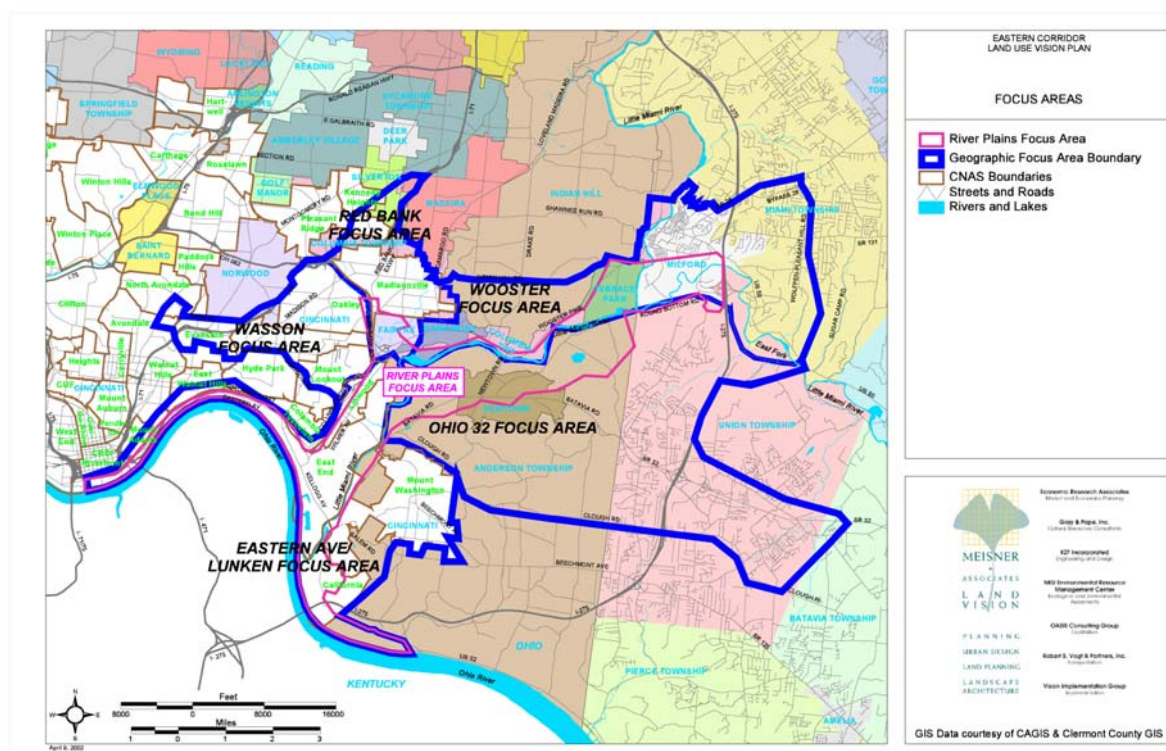


## Executive Summary

Beginning in December 2000 and continuing through April 2002, Meisner + Associates, with a team of subconsultants, conducted a Land Use Vision Planning Study for the Eastern Corridor of the Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan Region under the supervision of the Hamilton County Regional Planning Commission (HCRPC), and with the active participation of jurisdictions within Hamilton and Clermont County. This followed a Major Investment Study (MIS), conducted from 1996-2000, that endorsed a set of recommendations for multi-modal transportation improvements throughout the Eastern Corridor (see Figure 1-3, page 3). This land use planning effort, the only one of its kind in Ohio, and one of few being performed in the region and country, serves to coordinate multi-modal access and mobility improvements with long term multi-jurisdictional land use visioning. The study area (see Figure A, below) is over seventy (70) square miles, encompassing portions of seventeen (17) jurisdictions. Larger versions of the maps in this report may be found in a separate accompanying document (Appendix A).

### Eastern Corridor Focus Areas

Figure A



The population within this study area is 127,033, according to 2000 census data. Population in 2005 is projected by Economics Research Associates (ERA, 2002) to rise to 129,987 (using direct linear projections based on 1990 and 2000 census data). CACI Marketing Systems projects that population within the Eastern Corridor study area will fall to 123,093, by 2005. Regardless of which of these projections turns out to be more accurate, the type and location of demographic growth or decline will likely be affected by changes in access and mobility, or the lack thereof. ERA (2002) projects that implementation of selected transportation improvements, recommended in the Eastern Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS) (see Figure 1-3 on page 3) could bring in 10,200 new residents over the course of ten (10) years, and a total of 24,500 new residents over the course of twenty (20) years. These



transportation improvements are also projected to potentially lead to 4,900 new jobs bringing in wages of \$190 Million annually over ten years and 8,100 new jobs bringing in \$314 Million annually over 20 years (ERA, 2002). How this potential development is distributed throughout the region is part of the focus of this Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan.

The purpose of this planning effort is summarized in the following Mission Statement.

**Mission Statement:**

*Our Mission is to create a land use vision plan that will guide environmentally and economically sustainable development in the Eastern Corridor of the Greater Cincinnati Metropolitan Area. A cross-jurisdictional, collaborative process will be used to build consensus and create strategies to leverage limited public resources and ensure the equitable distribution of the benefits and impacts of improvements. The plan will be informed by the multi-modal transportation and access recommendations of the Eastern Corridor Major Investment Study (MIS).*

A series of analyses were performed to better understand the current context of the Eastern Corridor. These analyses included:

- Natural Features
- Ecological Features
- Existing Land Use, Zoning, and Current Planning Documents
- Cultural Resources
- Infrastructure
- Demographics, Market Context and Trends, and Economics
- Implementation Tools such as conservation easements and special economic districts

This information, along with educational material about basic planning principles was then presented to a Vision Group (approximately seventy (70) individuals representing a broad variety of interests throughout the Eastern Corridor) and six (6) Focus Area Groups of 20-30 participants (representing sub-areas of the Eastern Corridor). The six sub-areas are shown in Figure A on the previous page. With the aid of these “citizen planners” a series of “Action Items” were developed to bring about positive change in the region, and preserve existing assets.

The Action Items that received the highest prioritization included:

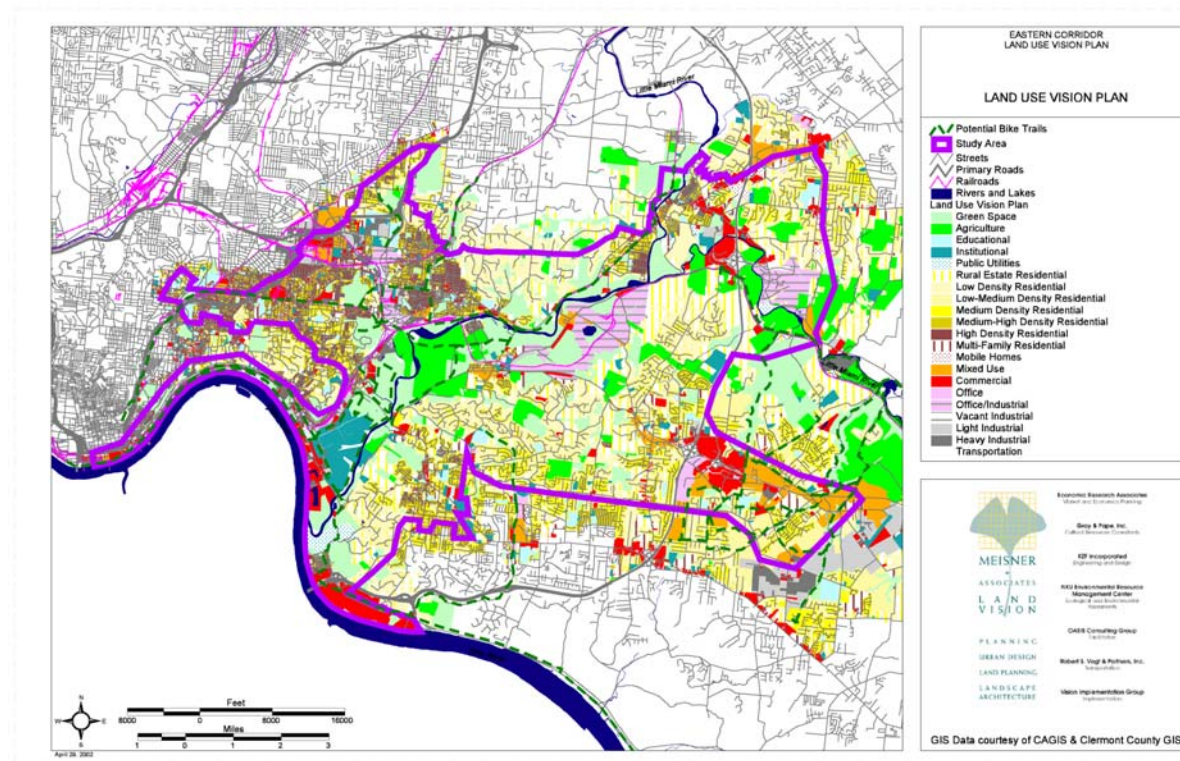
- Preserving agricultural and open space land in the Little Miami River Plains
- Creating connectivity improvements for people and goods throughout the Eastern Corridor
- Preserving existing parks and creating new parks for areas that are currently underserved
- Creating pedestrian-friendly communities and creating destinations that could be effectively served by modes of transportation other than only by automobiles, with pedestrian access and circulation pathways
- Reducing flood hazards and moderating stormwater runoff
- Preserving the visual quality of the US52 and US50 corridors
- Creating bike trail connections from neighborhoods to a regional network
- Encouraging office and industrial uses along the Red Bank Road corridor, while limiting retail development, possible with businesses incubators in a campus setting
- Developing Ancor (northeast of Newtown in Anderson Township, along Broadwell Road) and northeast Newtown with a mix of office, industrial and recreational uses, while preserving environmentally sensitive areas
- Redeveloping industrial uses on brownfields and creating industrial infill development near existing industrial uses
- Revitalizing the Madisonville neighborhood business district (NBD) on Madison Road, near Whetsel Ave., with more convenient access to transit and services
- Minimizing negative impacts that may arise from connectivity improvements
- Creating diverse neighborhoods with housing opportunities for all

Many other Action Items, in addition to those listed above, were identified as being important within the Eastern Corridor. A telephone public opinion survey, conducted with over 1000 people, indicated broad support for the vision plan recommendations.

A land use map of the Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan, shown in Figure B, below, was also developed through the public participation process.

### Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan

Figure B



The land use map is intended to show what was considered to be the best ultimate use of land, based on current information, for an undetermined time into the future. Social, political, economic, and environmental factors will have an influence on which areas are likely to experience development pressures or changes in land use.

This Vision Plan is intended as a guide document for local jurisdictions to utilize with their individual planning documents. The Vision Plan indicates what was envisioned at this point in time (2000-2002), based on current conditions, trends, and public participation. It is divided into five (5) sections. Section I provides an introduction to the Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan. Section II presents an overview of the Eastern Corridor, resulting from the analyses performed during the course of the study. Section III gives a brief overview of the planning process. Section IV presents the components of the Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan, focusing first on a corridor-wide opportunities and then examining each focus area. Section V describes some of the tools that may be used for implementing the Eastern Corridor Land Use Vision Plan.